

What is claimed is:

1. A bidder message processor comprising:  
     processing means for processing a bidder message entered through a bidder voice terminal into a bidder data signal, wherein said bidder data signal includes a bidder identifier; and  
     output means for outputting the bidder data signals at an auctioneer terminal.
2. The bidder message processor in claim 1, wherein the processing means further comprises means for recognizing an auction relevant bidder message.
3. The bidder message processor in claim 2, wherein the means for recognizing comprises means for decoding a Dual Tone Multi Frequency (DTMF) bidder message.
4. The bidder message processor in claim 2, wherein the means for recognizing comprises voice recognition means for decoding a voice bidder message.
5. The bidder message processor in any one of claims 3 or 4, wherein the means for recognizing further comprises means for identifying each detected auction relevant messages as being either one of a bid and an access messages.
6. The bidder message processor in claim 1, further comprising access control means for determining a right of access of a bidder to an auction.
7. The bidder message processor in claim 6, further comprising:  
     means for generating an access information request and transmitting the same to said bidder voice terminal.

8. The bidder message processor in claim 5, wherein the access message can be any one of a password, a credit information code, a response of compliance with predetermined access terms and conditions for the auction.
9. The bidder message processor in claim 5, wherein said access control means further comprises means for verifying the access messages.
10. The bidder message processor system in claim 9, wherein said means for verifying comprises means to connect to a database of access information..
11. A bidder message processor system comprising  
a bidder message processor as in claim 1; and  
connecting means for connecting said bidder message processor to said bidder voice terminal over a communications network.
12. The bidder message processor system in claim 11, wherein the bidder message processor further comprises access control means for determining a right of access of a bidder to an auction, and wherein the access control means generates access control signals for allowing said connecting means to connect the bidder voice terminal to the auctioneer terminal and for creating a record of participating bidders.
13. The bidder message processor system in claim 11, wherein said connecting means comprises connections through a Public Switch Telephony Network (PSTN).

14. The bidder message processor system in claim 11, wherein the connecting means is coupled to a voice conferencing means, for allowing the bidder voice terminal to voice conference with other bidder voice terminals connected to said auctioneer terminal through said connecting means.

15. The bidder message processor system in claim 14, wherein the connecting means is coupled to time compensation control means, for accounting for the propagation delay of said bidder message in travelling through the connecting means.

16. An auctioneer message processor system comprising:  
 an auctioneer voice transmitter for broadcasting auctioneer voice messages from an auctioneer terminal simultaneously to a plurality of bidder voice terminals; and  
 connecting means for connecting said bidder voice terminals to said auctioneer voice transmitter over a communications network.

17. An auctioneer message processor in claim 16, wherein a record of participating bidders is updated through said connecting means and said auctioneer voice transmitter broadcasts auctioneer voice messages only to bidder voice terminals selected according to said record of participating bidders.

18. An auction system for use in an auction conducted over a communications network, the auction system comprising:  
 a bidder message processor comprising:  
 means for processing a bidder message entered through any one of a plurality of bidder voice terminals into a bidder data signals, wherein said bidder data signal comprises a bidder identifier; and

means for outputting the bidder data signals at an auctioneer terminal;  
 an auctioneer voice transmitter for broadcasting auctioneer voice messages from the auctioneer terminal simultaneously to selected bidder voice terminals; and  
 connecting means for connecting said bidder voice terminals to the bidder message processor and to the auctioneer voice transmitter over the communications network.

19. An auction system comprising:

auctioneer output means;

a plurality of bid interpreters which in operation are connected to a plurality of corresponding bidders voice terminals, wherein each bid interpreter comprises:

means for decoding bidder messages;

means for attaching corresponding bidder identifiers to each decoded bidder message and forming data signals; and

means for transmitting the data signals to the auctioneer output means, over a communications network,

an auctioneer voice manager coupled to the bid interpreters, for receiving voice messages from an auctioneer voice transmitter over the communications network and for broadcasting the auctioneer voice messages simultaneously to all bidder voice terminals connected to the bidder interpreters.

20. A method of processing bidder messages for use in an auction conducted over a communications network, the method comprising the steps of:

processing a bidder messages received entered through a voice terminal into a data (digital) signals;

attaching a bidder identifier to said data signal; and

outputting said data signal at an auctioneer terminal.

21. A method of conducting an auction over a communications network, the method comprising the steps of:

transmitting bidders messages over the communications network by:

receiving the bidder messages from a plurality of bidder voice terminals;

processing bidders messages into data signals;

forming output signals by attaching bidder identifiers to selected data signals; and

sending and outputting the output signals at an auctioneer terminal; and

transmitting auctioneer messages over the communications network by:

receiving the auctioneer messages from the auctioneer terminal;

broadcasting the auctioneer messages to selected bidder voice terminals.

22. A computer data signal embodied in a carrier wave, said computer data signal comprising a set of machine executable code being executable by a computer to perform the steps of any one of claims 20 or 21.

23. A computer readable storage medium storing a set of machine executable code, said set of machine executable code being executable by a computer server to perform the steps of any one of claims 20 or 21.